

from every angle inside and out. Some day, he intends to study astronomy and become a planetarium lecturer.

In celebration of Dennis' 100th visit, George W. Bunton, manager of the Planetarium, presented him with ten complimentary tickets and a souvenir photograph of the Planetarium projector. The editors of "Sky and Telescope" read about Dennis' apparently unquenchable interest in the stars in the *Christian Science Monitor* and promptly mailed him a book, "Splendors of the Sky."

#### PAGING DR. KINSEY

DR. EARL S. HERALD, aquatic biologist in charge of Steinhart Aquarium, worked furiously taking data on more than 1300 sharks and bat stingrays that were caught Sunday, September 13, at the Coyote Point Shark Derby at San Mateo. A surprising sex ratio on brown smooth hound sharks was discovered—there were nine females for every male among the 578 of this species that were tallied. The mystery of this peculiar ratio is as yet unexplained.

Persons who collected material and took data at the derby were Robert Dempster, Norval Green, Kenneth Innes, Neal Band, Leonard Goodman, Dr. Joel Gustafson, Marvin Kolber, and Dr. Herald.

#### MORGAN TO STUDY IN GERMANY

MORRIS E. MORGAN, marine biologist on the Academy's staff, is taking a one-year leave of absence beginning October 1. He will go to Germany to study at the University of Munich. His wife and three daughters will travel with him.

#### VISITORS TO ACADEMY

RECENT VISITORS to the Department of Paleontology included Mr. Yoshio Kondo, Department of Mollusks, Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu, who spent two weeks here in July studying Pacific Island land snails, and Dr. Ralph W. Imlay, paleontologist, U. S. Geological Survey, who visited the Academy August 18-20 to study mesozoic fossil mollusks.

#### ASTRONOMY SECTION MEETS

THE next regular program meeting of the Astronomy Section will be held Wednesday, October 28, at 8 P. M. in the Student Lecture Room. Leon Salanave, Planetarium lecturer in charge of the section, will discuss "Observing Projects for Amateur Astronomers." There are a number of ways in which amateurs can make worth-while contributions to astronomical data while they are enjoying their hobby. Ways and means of starting up such projects will be outlined and discussed.

#### NEW MEMBERS

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS were elected by the Council at its meeting of September 17, 1953:

##### REGULAR MEMBERSHIP

Mr. William Y. Adams  
Miss Marie A. Hawley  
Mr. C. H. Webber

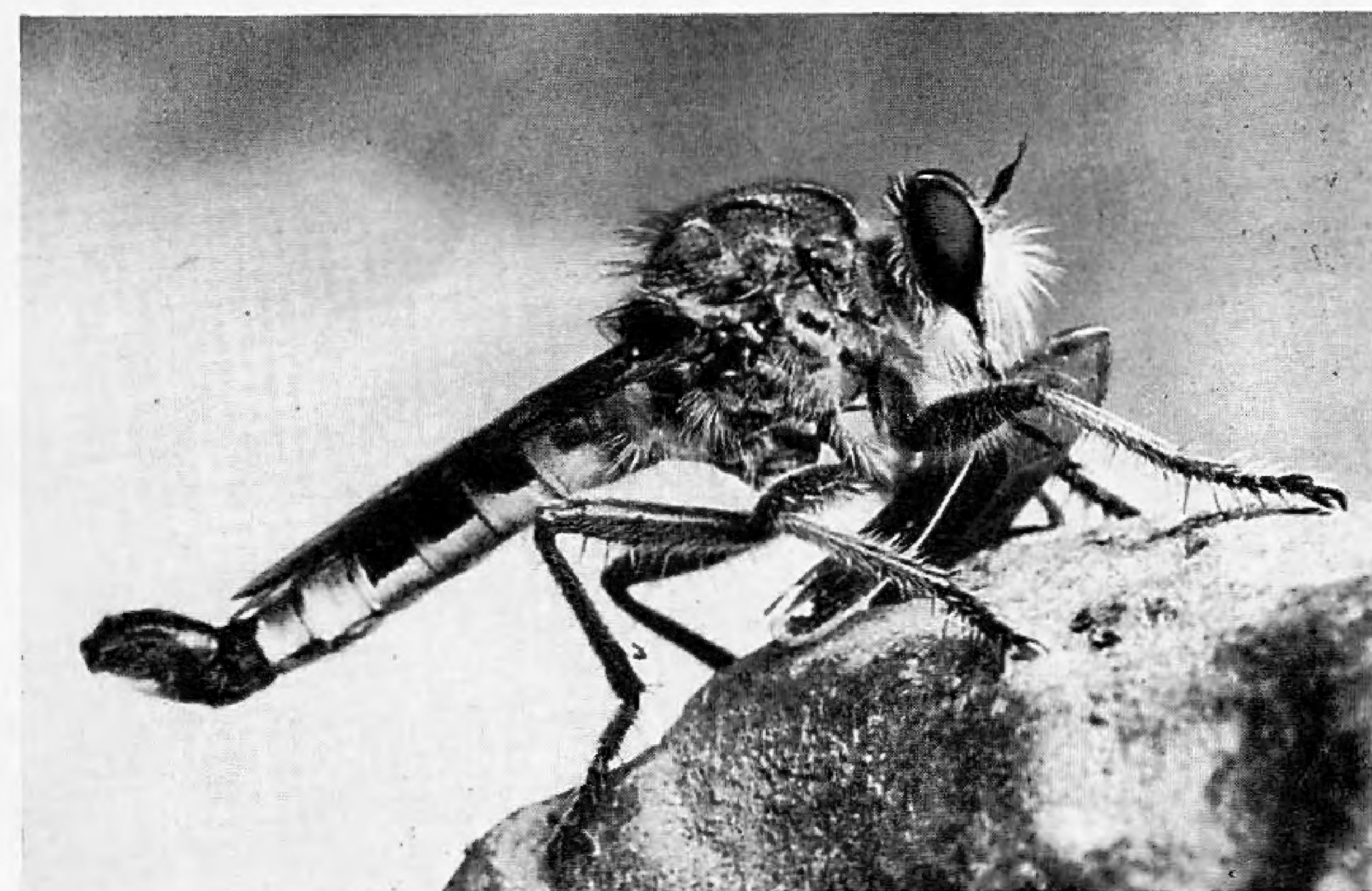
##### FAMILY MEMBERSHIP

Dr. Sol Maisler

# ACADEMY NEWS LETTER

NUMBER 166

OCTOBER 1953



Photograph by Dr. Edward S. Ross

#### HAWK OF THE INSECT WORLD

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*Published Monthly by*  
**CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES**  
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## October Announcement

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the California Academy of Sciences will be held at 8 P. M. Wednesday, October 7, in the Morrison Auditorium. The names of persons elected to the Board of Trustees and the Council will be announced, and reports of officers and staff members will be presented.

Members will also see "Sunrise Serenades," a color motion picture from the Academy's new film library. The library, which was established with funds from the Rosenberg Foundation and the May Treat Morrison Trust Estate, will be making its films available to the public and to other educational institutions soon.

"Sunrise Serenades" portrays the mating ceremonies of three species of grouse. The first sequence, filmed in Missouri, depicts the courtship habits of the prairie chicken. In the second sequence, the ceremonies of the sage grouse of western Wyoming are seen. For the third sequence, the camera travels to the lonely plains of Saskatchewan where the struttings of the male sharp-tailed grouse are observed as he dances for the appreciation of the female.

The sounds accompanying the ceremonial antics have been faithfully recorded, and the similarity between the pattern of authentic Indian ceremonial dances and the movements of the sharp-tailed grouse are pointed out.

### INSECT BOOK PUBLISHED

SOMETHING QUITE GOOD has been added to the roster of books on natural history subjects. It's an 80-page booklet, "Insects Close Up," written by Dr. Edward S. Ross, curator of entomology, and published by the University of California Press.

For some time now Dr. Ross has been hunting insects with a camera. His pictures of living insects in their natural surroundings reveal new facts about everyday life in the insect world. For example, by stopping insects in midair with an electronic flash, one can observe flying techniques, or an enlargement will show in detail the posture of a predacious insect when it is holding its prey. (See the robber fly on our cover, an illustration from the book.)

"Insects Close Up" presents some of Dr. Ross' best photographic work: 95 portraits of the characters, heroes, and villains of insect society. Eight of the illustrations are in full color. Accompanying text gives a brief description of each insect and the place it occupies in a complicated and interrelated world that is only occasionally seen by the average person.

Having shown his readers some of the wonders of the insect world, Dr. Ross then gives them his trade secrets on candid insect photography and also offers instructions to those who wish to collect insects.

The booklet, which is to be released October 3, will be available at the Academy as well as at leading bookstores.

### GENUINE DESERT RAT CAUGHT

ON SATURDAY, August 29, at 5 A. M., seven members of the Student Section began an eight-day trip that took them through the deserts of eastern Nevada and southern California. They were Thomas Briggs, Michael Lagios, John O'Rourke, William Pope, Peter Raven, and Student Section supervisors Samuel Carpenter and Frederick Schuierer.

By 10 A. M. the station wagon entered Yosemite Valley with its seven occupants, their sleeping bags, food, clothes, collecting gear, reference books, and other "essentials." They stopped only long enough to eat box lunches and then pushed on over the Tioga Pass and southward to Bishop. The first collecting was done there while they were getting a tire replaced.

Several hours later, after traveling through Westgard Pass, the travelers made their first camp at Deep Spring Lake, Inyo County. Even though it was dark, they set trap lines and scouted over the area for specimens of a toad, *Bufo boreas exsule*, which is restricted to this area. Not until enough specimens had been obtained did they have dinner and roll into their sleeping bags for a well-earned rest.

The crew was up with the sun the next morning. Before breakfast they collected the rodents trapped during the night. During the morning they began preparing study skins of the mammals and collected the plants, lizards, insects, and minerals of the area. This established a pattern for morning activities. They arrived at most of their subsequent camps early enough in the afternoon to do some good collecting, set traps, write notes, and have dinner before sundown.

As the expedition proceeded south through the Amargosa Desert and the Pahrump Valley in Nevada many forms new to the travelers were seen and collected. They traveled on south, along the Colorado River to the Yuma area. The return trip included stops in the Mojave Desert.

The students came back with many fine specimens, some of which are now in the Academy collections. Fifty-six herpetological specimens, including snakes, lizards, frogs, and toads, were collected. More than 130 plants, including many cacti, were brought back. Thirty-six specimens of small desert mammals were captured and made into study skins. A considerable number of minerals were obtained and insects, spiders, scorpions, solpugids, and related forms were captured by the score.

### HEY HAYDEN!

AT LAST COUNT, Dennis Brandt, 14, had seen 101 shows in Morrison Planetarium, to clinch the title of "most loyal fan."

Dennis, who is a student at Roosevelt Junior High, saw the first show that was open to the public on November 8, 1952. Since that time he has averaged more than ten visits to each month's show in the sky theater. He lives at 673 Ninth Avenue, and he has whittled his walking time to the Planetarium down to 2 minutes and 30 seconds, he says.

Dennis earns money as a newspaper delivery boy, spends most of it on books about astronomy and on visits to the Planetarium. His visits to the Planetarium are leading him into amateur photography. He has taken pictures of the theater